

Whitefriars Community School

Whitefriars Avenue, Wealdstone, Harrow, HA3 5RQ

Inspection dates 3–4 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Outstanding leadership and management have resulted in significant and continuing improvements in teaching, pupils' progress, attendance and behaviour since the last inspection.
- Pupils make good progress over time. While the proportion of pupils gaining expected levels in English and mathematics is below national averages, the gap is closing rapidly.
- Teaching is good across all year groups and some teaching is outstanding. Teachers have high expectations and plan work that helps pupils make rapid progress.
- Pupils feel safe in school. They are happy, enjoy learning and have good attitudes towards their work.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and adults are skilful in encouraging pupils to choose to behave well.
- The governing body is very effective in raising expectations of what can be achieved. It ensures that teachers' performance management, linked to professional development, leads to improvements in teaching.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Too little teaching is outstanding. This is because a few of the pupils who have complex needs or who could attain the highest levels do not make progress at the same accelerated rate that the majority are making.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 25 lessons, of which four were joint observations with the headteacher or senior leaders.
- In addition, inspectors heard pupils from Years 1 and 2 read, watched an assembly and observed a presentation for pupils that was linked to their lessons.
- Inspectors took account of the online parent questionnaire (Parent View) and had brief discussions with parents and carers at the start of the second day.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders and managers, the Chair of the federated Governing Body, the Chair of the previous Governing Body, two representatives of the local authority and two groups of pupils.
- Inspectors looked at various aspects of the school’s work, including documentation about safeguarding, pupils’ progress, behaviour and attendance. They also looked at pupils’ books, planning and evaluation records, a recent parent and carer survey conducted by the school and minutes of meetings of the governing body.

Inspection team

Helen Howard, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Ann Short

Additional inspector

George Richard Rayner

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is much larger than the average primary school. It shares its site with Whitefriars Children's Centre, which was inspected separately.
- Since the last inspection, the school formed a partnership with Heathland School. In August 2012, the partnership became a hard federation and the headteacher of Heathland was appointed as the executive headteacher for both schools.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding, which gives additional funding to pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and to children in public care, is well above average.
- Approximately 95% of pupils are from minority ethnic groups, with the largest groups having Indian, Asian or Black African heritages. More than three quarters of pupils speak English as an additional language and many are at the first stages of learning English.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and who are supported by school action is broadly average. A much higher than average proportion are supported by school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs. The majority of these have behavioural, emotional or social difficulties, speech and language difficulties or moderate learning difficulties.
- More than one third of pupils join or leave the school at different times.
- In 2011, which is the most recent year for which results are confirmed, the school did not meet the government's floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that more teaching is outstanding by making sure that:
 - teachers consistently use ongoing assessment during lessons so that all pupils can move quickly to their next stage of learning
 - teachers consistently plan and resource activities that help pupils with complex special educational needs to make even better progress in lessons
 - training is provided for teachers to deepen their subject knowledge so that they can set even more demanding work for pupils who could attain the highest levels.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Standards and achievement are rising rapidly across the school. Children join with well below expected levels of skills and abilities and many do not speak English. Because staff welcome them so warmly, children settle very quickly. Although they do not all reach the targets expected for their age, they make good progress by the time they start Year 1.
- There have been steady year-on-year improvements at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Consequently, the gap between what pupils achieve at Whitefriars and nationally is closing. Rates of progress that pupils make from their starting points have accelerated and school records show that these are being sustained in every year group.
- Pupils' attainment is affected by high rates of mobility but very good tracking systems mean that the school is able to show good progress for those pupils who join the school at different times. The school takes every opportunity to make sure that all pupils have equal opportunities to succeed and this is reflected in their progress over time.
- The school has focused on raising attainment in literacy, especially in literacy and reading. Attainment in reading at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is moving closer to the national average.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress overall because when they join in the Nursery or Reception, staff take every opportunity to develop speaking and listening skills and this continues throughout the school.
- Approximately 140 pupils are supported through extra funding and they say that the school helps them to make good progress. One pupil said 'My one-to-one teacher has made me feel more confident. I am good at maths now.' Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because other adults support them very well in lessons. However, a small number do not always make progress at the same fast rate.
- Most pupils make good progress from their starting points. However, progress rates for some of the most able pupils are not as fast as for other pupils.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and plan work that closely matches pupils' needs. The introduction of 'next steps' grouping in lessons is effective in helping pupils to move quickly on to their next stage of learning and makes sure that teaching has good pace.
- Adults use praise effectively to encourage pupils and build confidence. Pupils support each other very well. For example, in a Year 4 mathematics lesson in which pupils were halving and doubling numbers, one pupil patiently explained to another what methods she used so that he could complete his work.
- Teachers are very enthusiastic and strive to make learning fun. Pupils say that they enjoy being given practical tasks. In a Year 6 science lesson, pupils had a range of resources to demonstrate what they knew about light and dark. They were able to explain daylight by shining torchlight on rotating objects.
- Adults use questioning very well to encourage pupils to think independently. For example, in the Nursery when a child stated that he had dirty hands, the teacher replied, 'What could you do about that, do you think?' This good questioning continues throughout the school so that teachers consistently deepen pupils' understanding and help them to learn independently.
- Teachers give pupils many opportunities to reflect on their learning, by checking how pupils feel about what they are doing. In some outstanding lessons, teachers skilfully use these checks throughout lessons and adapt their teaching so that all pupils make rapid progress. This practice is not yet embedded in all lessons.
- Occasionally, teachers do not plan well enough in advance so that resources are not available to support individual pupils with complex needs and they do not always make the fast progress that they could. Additionally, a few pupils are beginning to attain very high levels for their age. Not all teachers have enough specific subject knowledge to help these pupils make rapid progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The school values each and every pupil. Pupils from all ethnic groups get on very well together, including in the Nursery and Reception, where children play happily together and share well. The majority of pupils behave well in lessons and around the school, although some pupils are more restless after the lunch break or assembly.
- Pupils respect each other's views. They support each other in lessons and on the playground. The school has focused on particular values and embeds them in all aspects of school life so that pupils reflect on different beliefs and cultures and develop tolerance of others.
- Adults very skilfully manage behaviour for a few pupils who find it more difficult to focus on learning. They consistently use positive language to promote good behaviour. For example, one teacher in a Year 5 class said, 'You may wish to choose to move your seat so that you are not distracted.' Pupils respond very well to this calm and respectful environment, which quietly underpins the school's values. Consequently, the use of exclusion and incidents of poor behaviour are very rare.
- Pupils say that behaviour in school has improved 'a lot' since the last inspection and they feel very safe in school. They are aware of types of bullying, including internet bullying and say that this is rare. They are confident that adults do not tolerate bullying or discrimination and that they would manage any incidents immediately and well.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good and they become confident learners. They enjoy working in pairs and small group discussions in lessons because these encourage them to remain interested and engaged in learning.
- Attendance, which was low in the last inspection, has risen and is now average and improving further as a result of the school's work in partnership with parents and carers. The school has a firm attitude towards not allowing holidays in term-time and this has significantly reduced absences.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The inspirational leadership shown by the executive headteacher over time has resulted in significant improvements at Whitefriars in teaching, achievement, attendance and behaviour. He has been very well supported by experienced senior leaders and managers and by the governing body.
- The headteacher is well supported by experienced senior leaders across the federation, who are clear about their responsibilities. They support the drive to improve teaching by carefully observing lessons and offering constructive feedback so that teachers know precisely what they need to do to improve further. Leaders link this closely to each teacher's areas for improvement during performance management.
- The school has highly effective ways to check progress. Leaders and managers self-evaluate their work very effectively and know the school's strengths and areas for development very well. They plan well to close gaps in pupils' learning and show that they have the capacity to improve further.
- The local authority provides very effective support to the school, especially in its focus on actions to improve teaching. Its regular reviews and recommendations ensure that the school remains on track to make sustained improvements.
- There are many opportunities in the curriculum to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, so that pupils are very well prepared for living in a diverse society. These include links with a rural school in the United Kingdom and a school in Uganda. Moral and social development has a high priority and this is a strong feature of the school.
- The school is working hard to involve parents and carers more fully in their child's learning. Most families spoken to during the inspection and those who answered a recent school questionnaire are very pleased with the quality of education in the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - ensures that through careful monitoring, there is rapid and sustained progress in teaching and achievement through the partnership with an outstanding primary school
 - carefully evaluates the use of pupil premium funding to ensure that pupils who receive the additional support, make good progress
 - ensures that representatives of the governing body know the school very well, including its strengths

- and gaps so that they can provide challenge to school leaders
 - makes sure that arrangements for safeguarding are outstanding. The school takes its responsibility to protect children very seriously and all statutory duties are met.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	102184
Local authority	Harrow
Inspection number	400537

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	442
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lynne Malzard
Headteacher	Chris Spruce
Date of previous school inspection	4–5 November 2009
Telephone number	020 8427 2080
Fax number	020 8861 2651
Email address	office@Whitefriars.harrow.sch.co.uk

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